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FBI S 51 (SEE 50)

MOSCOW RADIO CARRIES USSR FOREIGN MINISTRY PROTEST ON BOMBING

LI 71538 MOSCOW DOMESTIC SERVICE IN RUSSIAN 1445 GMT 17 APR 72 L

(TEXT) U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE USSR BEAM WAS INVITED TO THE USSR FOREIGN MINISTRY ON 17 APRIL. THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WAS MADE TO THE U.S. AMBASSADOR:

ON 16 APRIL THIS YEAR DURING THE U.S. AIR FORCE RAID ON HAIPHONG, AS A RESULT OF THE BOMBING AND SHELLING OF THE PORT THE SOVIET TRADING VESSELS SIMFEROPOL, FORIS LAVRENEV, SAMUIL MARSHAK AND PALANGA WERE DAMAGED AND RECEIVED NUMEROUS HOLES, INCLUDING IN THE CREW'S LIVING QUARTERS. THE LIVES AND SAFETY OF THE SOVIET SEAMEN WERE ENDANGERED. THERE WERE KILLED AND WOUNDED AMONG THE PORT'S WORKERS, WHO WERE ENGAGED IN LOADING OPERATIONS ABOARD THE SOVIET VESSELS.

THESE PIRATIC ACTIONS BY THE AMERICAN AIR FORCE ARE A GROSS VIOLATION OF THE GENERALLY RECOGNIZED NORMS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND FREEDOM OF SHIPPING. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BEARS THE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS BY AMERICAN ARMED FORCES AND FOR THE POSSIBLE DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH ACTIONS.

THE USSR FOREIGN MINISTRY, AT THE INSTRUCTION OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, PROTESTS TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT OVER THIS CRIMINAL ACT AGAINST SOVIET TRADING VESSELS IN THE PORT OF HAIPHONG AND INSISTS ON THE IMMEDIATE ADOPTION BY THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES OF STRICT MEASURES TO PREVENT SUCH PROVOCATIONS IN THE FUTURE.

17 APR 1601Z DW/CAJ